

SELGEMUNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

George Washington Carver Homestead Site

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

SE $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec. 4, T 19 S, R 26 W

One and one-half miles south of Beeler

CITY, TOWN

Beeler

☒

VICINITY OF

No. 1, Keith Sebelius

STATE

Kansas

CODE

20

COUNTY

Ness

CODE

135

3 CLASSIFICATION**CATEGORY**☐ DISTRICT☐ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☒ SITE☐ OBJECT**OWNERSHIP**☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED**STATUS**☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS**ACCESSIBLE**☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO**PRESENT USE**☒ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

ED 10 200

Mrs. Elma Ward

STREET & NUMBER

1530 Cherry Lane

CITY, TOWN

Great Bend

VICINITY OF

STATE

Kansas

67530

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Register of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

Ness County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Ness City

STATE

Kansas

67560

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Survey of Historic Sites & Structures in Kansas

DATE

1957

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Kansas State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Topeka

STATE

Kansas

66612

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT

☐ GOOD

☒ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED

☐ RUINS

☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED

☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE

☐ MOVED

DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The George Washington Carver Homestead site is located a mile south of Beeler, Kan., and is today 160 acres of agricultural land with no buildings remaining. The highest point is at the southeast corner of the property; from there the land slopes gradually to the northwest. The hillside is terraced and apparently has been cultivated in the past although in December, 1975, it was covered with short weeds and grass.

In the northeast corner of the quarter section and adjacent to the county road is a small fenced-off area containing a stone marker commemorating Carver which was erected in 1953 by the Ness County Historical Society. (It was dedicated October 11, 1953, with a crowd of 1,500 to 2,000 people in attendance. Lieutenant Governor Fred Hall delivered the dedicatory address.)

No visible trace remains of the sod house Carver erected in 1886. The site was farmed over many years ago.

B SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		Western Settlement Ethnic History

SPECIFIC DATES 1886-1888 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The George Washington Carver Homestead site in Ness County, Kan., marks a brief interlude in the educational pursuits of the man who later received great acclaim as a botanist, agronomist, conservationist, humanitarian and teacher.

Carver was born into slavery around 1860 on the small southwest Missouri farm owned by Moses Carver; he never knew the exact date of his birth. Orphaned at an early age, he lived with the Carvers until his desire for an education compelled him to leave. After going to school for a time at Neosho, Mo., he came to Kansas in 1876. He attended schools at Fort Scott, Olathe, Paola and Minneapolis and graduated from high school at the latter.

After an unsuccessful effort to enroll at Highland College, Highland, Kan., Carver went to Ness County in western Kansas in 1886 and filed a homestead claim on 160 acres. Western Kansas had been opened for settlement about eight years earlier, but after an initial boom settlement had lagged. Another westward surge of settlers occurred in 1886. Carver went to the same area where a friend, Frank Beeler, had earlier gone. Beeler had opened a store at a trail crossing which became a town named after him.

Carver built a small sod house, broke some ground, and planted crops and trees. When not working on his own place, he hired out to work on a nearby ranch. According to all accounts, he was one of very few black homesteaders in Ness county. Local people later recalled his skill at building sod structures; when new homesteaders needed assistance with their buildings, he was usually the first to be called. His musical talents, both with instruments and in singing were widely known. Other abilities recalled by his neighbors were his interests in painting, in collecting rocks and Indian relics, and his ability to grow flowers and plants in the most adverse circumstances. Clare C. Duncan, a black woman who had been one of the first teachers at Talladega College, one of the first institutions for higher learning for blacks, came to Ness county to homestead. She gave Carver instruction and guidance in his painting and also taught him to control his voice, which reportedly was quite high-pitched.

In the summer of 1888 he mortgaged the property to the Borthwick Bank at Ness City for \$300 and went to Iowa. According to some accounts, when he left Kansas his intention was to acquire a green house but instead

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Carroll, William R., and Merle E. Muhrer, The Scientific Contributions of George Washington Carver (n.p., 1962).

"Carver Marker Dedicated near Beeler Sunday," Ness County News (Ness City), Oct. 15, 1953.

"'Detour' in Scientist's Life Led Him to a Ness County Sod Home," Salina Journal, May 22, 1960.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 160

UTM REFERENCES

ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A 14	396095	4253875	B 14	396100	4253070
C 14	395290	4253080	D 14	395285	4253880

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Richard Pankratz, Director, Historic Sites Survey

ORGANIZATION

Kansas State Historical Society

DATE

May 6, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

120 West Tenth Street

TELEPHONE

296-3251

CITY OR TOWN

Topeka

STATE

Kansas 66612

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Wyle H. Miller

TITLE

Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society

DATE

July 29, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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George Washington Carver Homestead Site

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE 1

6.

Federal Writer's Project of the Work Projects Administration

1939

X

State

Records were destroyed, but a book entitled Kansas, A Guide to the Sunflower State was published in 1939.

8.

he decided to continue his education. He made interest payments on the loan for a number of years, perhaps as late as 1893, but then deeded the property to Fred Borthwick.

After graduating from Iowa State College, he was invited by Booker T. Washington to join the staff of Tuskegee Institute in Alabama and head its newly formed Agricultural Department. He remained there until his death in 1943. During his tenure at Tuskegee he wrote more than 40 technical bulletins and circulars which were mainly designed to help the poor black farmers of northern Alabama. In these he advocated modern farming techniques, most of which were quite new to his target audience. His national fame and publicity came after 1921 when he became a national spokesman for the peanut industry.

Carver's achievements were primarily in the fields of his early training--biology and plant pathology. He used an interdisciplinary approach, utilizing botany and chemistry to solve agricultural problems. George Washington Carver was widely respected and admired, and he was often honored at the highest levels for his accomplishments. The Carver Foundation was set up at Tuskegee in 1940 to continue research to aid humanity.

The importance of the two years he spent on his homestead in Ness county in relation to his later accomplishments is difficult to determine. He went to Ness county at a low point in his life, having been refused admittance to college because of his race. The two years he spent there, working the land, were not easy; he experienced droughts, blizzards and privations. But during that time he put himself together, mentally and emotionally, and he left in 1888 with the resolve that carried him through his collegiate studies.

The Carver Homestead site is one of a very few places of importance to black history which have so far been identified in Kansas, and for this reason as well as the later significance of George Washington Carver, it should be entered on the National Register of Historic Places.

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9.

Elliott, Lawrence, George Washington Carver: The Man Who Overcame (Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1946), pp. 37, 38, 46, 47, 57-59.

"A Famous Homesteader," High Plains Journal (Dodge City), Oct. 27, 1949.

"Friends of Old Days in Kansas Saw Budding Genius of Negro Scientist," Kansas City Times, Sept. 9, 1942.

Graham, Shirley, and George D. Lipscomb, Dr. George Washington Carver, Scientist (Julian Messner, Inc., New York, 1944), pp. 96-98

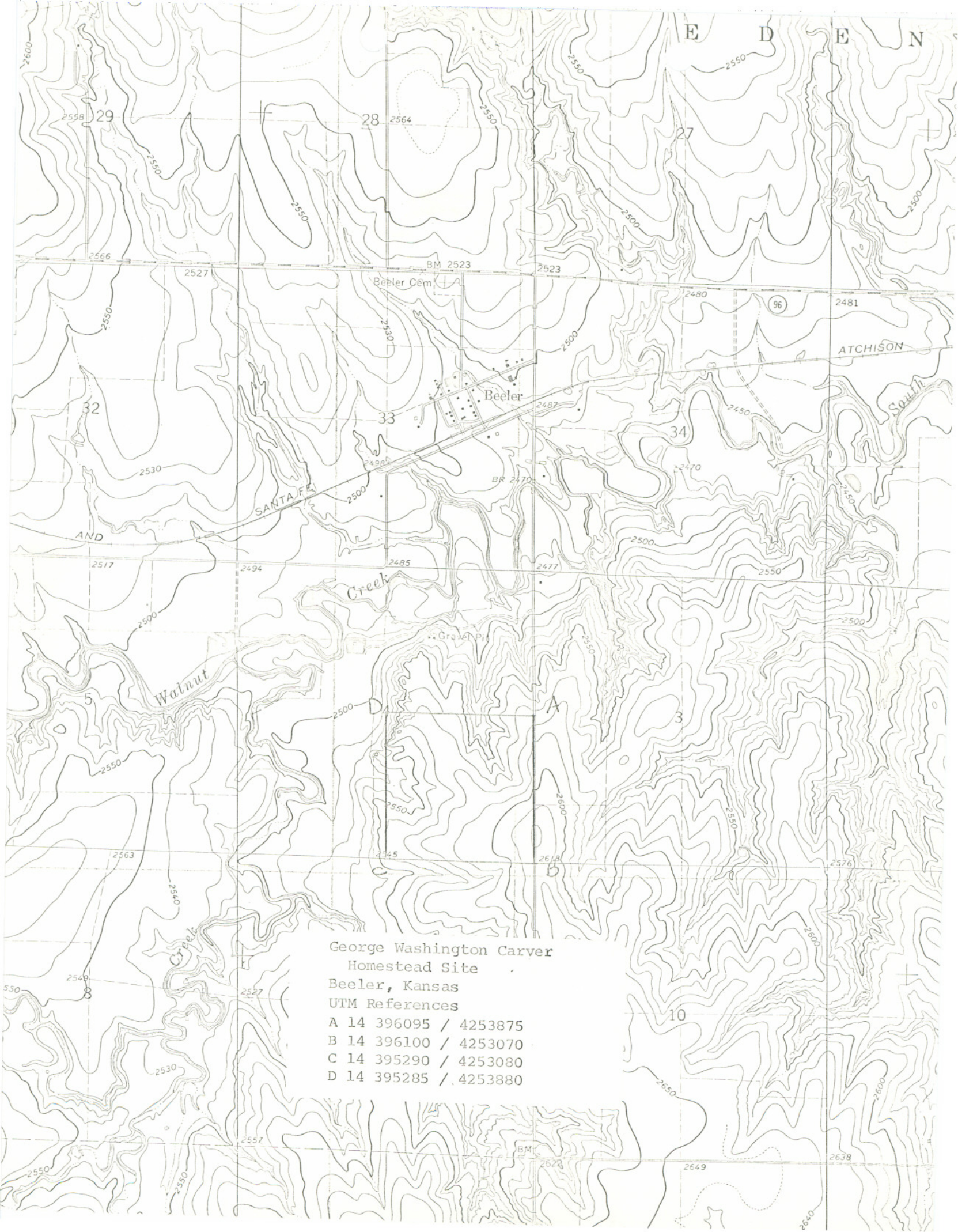
Holt, Rackham, George Washington Carver: An American Biography (Doubleday, Garden City, N. Y. 1943), pp. 45, 49, 52, 53.

National Cyclopedia of American Biography (James T. White and Co., New York, 1947), v. 33, pp. 316, 317.

"Negro Orphan Lad Works Way to Worldwide Renown," Ness County News (Ness City), May 30, 1946.

"Ness County to Erect Marker to Negro Scientist," Satanta Chief, Aug. 1, 1946.

Tract Book (Microfilmed Homestead Records), Kansas State Historical Society.



George Washington Carver
Homestead Site
Beeler, Kansas
UTM References
A 14 396095 / 4253875
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